



The VA-STEP Program

The VA-STUDENT TRAINEE EXPERIENCE PROGRAM (VA-STEP) is an honors program for select nursing students who have completed the junior year of a baccalaureate nursing program. VA-STEP provides a structured clinical experience with a BSN-prepared preceptor and educational course work in a classroom setting. The program starts with a ten-week (full-time) concentrated experience during the summer and an optional part-time experience during the senior year.

Program Goals

- Learn the role of the professional nurse within a healthcare system using evidence-based practice for best patient outcomes
- Understand the culture and special needs of the Veteran population
- Develop confidence, critical thinking, and proficiency of nursing skills

VA-STEP Program Contact Information

Michelle T. Ward MS RN

**Education Specialist
VA-STEP Coordinator**

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Nurse Recruiter

**Carolyn Scott, MSN
RN**

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**VA-STEP
(VA-STUDENT
TRAINEE EXPERIENCE
PROGRAM)
PREVIOUSLY VALOR**



**ALBANY STRATTON VA HEALTH
CARE SYSTEM**

**U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration**



VETERANS AFFAIRS
STUDENT TRAINEE
EXPERIENCE
PROGRAM
(VA-STEP) PREVIOUSLY
VALOR

The VA-STEP **nurse externship** provides hands-on opportunities for outstanding nursing students to develop competencies in the clinical setting with an experienced BSN-prepared preceptor. VA-STEP Externs shadow their preceptor to learn the role of the professional nurse, while performing skills learned in nursing school. Planned didactic days offer additional learning experiences.

VA-STEP Program
Eligibility Eligible students
will:

- Be currently enrolled in an accredited BSN program
- Have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, with no grade lower than a B in any nursing course
- Have completed the final semester/quarter of junior year prior to the program start date.
- Have had at least one clinical experience in a medical center or hospital.
- Be a U.S. Citizen.
- Provide documentation of immunization status and current Health Care Provider BLS training
- Submit all application materials by the deadline
- Not have a service obligation to any Federal, state, or private institution or be a recipient of any Federal scholarship that incurs a service obligation
- Be able to work full-time during the summer months and part-time during the academic year.

BENEFITS



- VA-STEP students are paid as hourly, intermittent employees.
- VA-STEP students are not eligible for overtime pay, holiday pay, or shift differentials. The rate of pay changes each year.
- VA-STEP students may express a preference for a unit, but they will be placed according to preceptor availability and unit needs. VA-STEP students may rotate to other units for observational experiences.
- Students in an accelerated BSN program can apply for the VA-STEP program if available to work full time from June – August of the program start year.

MISSION

TO FULFILL PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S PROMISE: "TO CARE FOR HIM WHO SHALL HAVE BORNE THE BATTLE, AND FOR HIS WIDOW, AND HIS ORPHAN" BY SERVING AND HONORING THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE AMERICA'S VETERANS.

Application Process:

- Request an application for Federal Employment from Carolyn Scott, MS RN Nurse Recruiter via email at Carolyn.scott4@va.gov.
- Submit a completed application form 10-2850a, Form 306, transcript, and a letter from the Dean of Nursing
- to : Stratton VA Medical Center
Attention: Carolyn Scott, Nurse Recruiter
113 Holland Avenue
Mail Code 118
Albany, NY 12208

The letter should include:

- Nomination of the student to the VA-STEP Program
- Verification of enrollment as a full-time student
- Successful completion of junior year by May/June 2023
- Expected graduation within one year of entry in the VA-STEP program
- **Applications will be accepted through 3/15/2023**